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24 August 1966

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# CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE  
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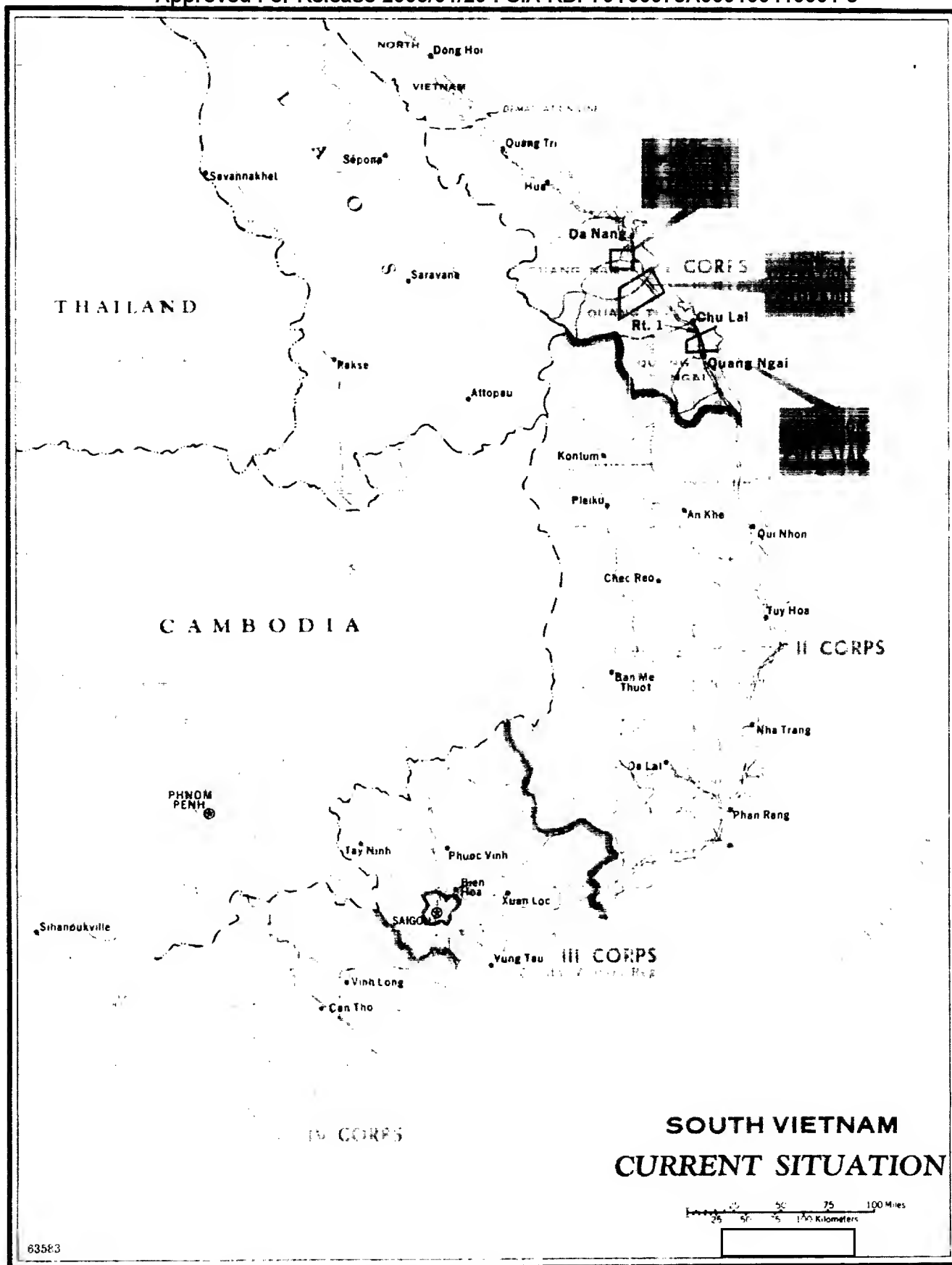
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\*Vietnam: (Information as of 4:30 AM EDT)

The Military Situation in South Vietnam: Only light combat has been reported from allied operations under way throughout the country.

Operation ALLEGHENY, a new search-and-destroy operation by a battalion of US Marines in Quang Nam Province about 15 miles southwest of Da Nang, has reported one engagement so far. A platoon of Marines searching a battalion-sized Communist base camp--containing two 60-man classrooms and 30 15-man houses--was attacked by an unknown number of Viet Cong and lost 14 wounded before the enemy was driven off by supporting aircraft. (See Map)

The three-battalion US Marine Operation COLORADO, conducted since 5 August in Quang Nam and Quang Tin provinces, ended on 22-23 August. A total of 514 Communist troops were killed and 54 captured. US casualties were 25 killed and 177 wounded, while a seven-battalion South Vietnamese force which participated in the operation for ten days lost 50 killed and 203 wounded. (See Map)

Three South Korean battalions yesterday initiated Operation POLE STAR to clear both sides of coastal Route 1 between Chu Lai and Quang Ngai town in northern Quang Ngai Province. The North Vietnamese 21st Regiment, with a strength of 2,000, is believed to be in this area. (See Map)

Political Developments in South Vietnam: Reports of Viet Cong activities aimed at disrupting the September constituent assembly election continue to be received.

(continued)

These reports, varying in reliability, range from Viet Cong anti-election propaganda in all regions of the country to the specific deployment of a well-armed enemy battalion near populated areas of Quang Nam Province. [Among alleged Viet Cong plans are the seizure of voter identity cards, assassination of candidates, sabotage of polling places, and interception of ballot boxes.]

A US consular officer in Da Nang reports that neither the urban nor rural population in his district appears noticeably affected by Communist anti-election activity to date. Communist intimidation activities seem most likely to affect the rural populace, whereas the most serious threat to a large voter turn-out in Da Nang itself probably stems from a Buddhist boycott. [redacted]

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[redacted] a Buddhist boycott could restrict voting in the northern provinces to only 30 or 40 percent of the electorate. He expects the turn-out in the southern provinces to average about 50 percent of registered voters, with possibly 60 percent voting in the Saigon area.] [redacted]

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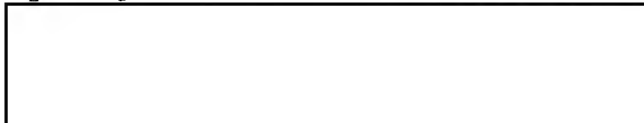
Communist China: The struggle within the Chinese Communist Party is continuing.

A People's Daily editorial on 23 August declared war on a "faction in power" which is stubbornly resisting party leadership and "taking the road of capitalism." The paper charged that unnamed members of this faction have been instigating attacks on "revolutionary students" to deflect the fire of the cultural revolution drive from themselves.

This is the first time Peking has used the term "faction" to describe Mao Tse-tung's opposition. It had been insisting that only a "small handful" of people opposed him.

People's Daily focused its attack on second-level officials--party leaders of "areas or units"--but an editorial in the equally authoritative journal Red Flag on 19 August indicated that higher officials may be involved. It demanded the dismissal "from his official posts and functions" of any person who opposes Mao, "no matter how high his position, how old his standing, and how great his 'fame.'" This is similar to statements made in early June, when the fall of senior politburo member Peng Chen was being publicized.

It is not clear whether those now in control of the party are setting the stage for public denunciation of officials already demoted or dismissed or are preparing to bring down additional high-level figures.



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